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What do users value about the emergency ambulance service?

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Background

- Narrow focus of current quality indicators for ambulance services.
- Patient perspective of care becoming increasingly important.

Aim

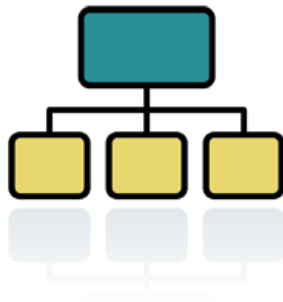
- To investigate patients' experiences of the 999 ambulance service to understand the processes and outcomes important to them.

Method

- Purposive sampling
- Three levels of response
 - Category 1 = hear and treat
 - Category 2 = see and treat
 - Category 3 = see and convey

Method

- Semi-structured interviews.
- Topic guide.
- NVivo8.
- Thematic analysis.



Results

- 11 Males and 11 Females participated (n=22)
- 13 of the participants were aged 65+ over

	Hear and treat	See and treat	See and convey
Official Response Category	6	9	7
Patient Reported Response category	2	7	13

Emerging themes

Theme	Sub-theme
Not waiting too long for help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alleviation of fear, distress and panic • Perceived need • Timeliness vs. time
Information provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication style
Professional relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassurance • Confidence in clinicians abilities • Clinician behaviour and conduct
Smooth transition along the prehospital care pathway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call handling stage • Wait for ambulance • Time on scene • Journey to hospital • Handover

Not waiting too long for help

- The meaning of help was different for different people
- Distinction between *needing* and *wanting* a quick response time

Not waiting too long for help

- Desire to have immediate contact with individual(s) that are perceived to know what they are doing

Information Provision

- Patients wanted to be kept 'in the loop' with approximate response times
- The approach used to request information or disseminate it to patients was important
 - Jovial vs. Formal

Professional Relationship

- Patients valued the reassurance provided to them within the rapport developed with the clinicians
- There was an association between the reassurance provided and the confidence felt in the clinicians abilities to treat patients effectively

Smooth transition along the prehospital care pathway

- Some patients reported the call handling stage as being the most highly valued stage
- Often the call handler would remain on the phone until the clinicians arrived

Smooth transition along the prehospital care pathway

- Patients were satisfied with the assessments and treatment they received on scene
- Only voiced concerns if they were:
 - not able to choose the hospital they were being admitted to
 - the hospital care was not at the same high standard as the prehospital service

What have we learnt?

- Aspects of prehospital emergency care other than 'response time' were highly valued by patients
- It was challenging to engage participants in considering factors other than response times for potential new outcome measures

Where do we go from here?

- Results will contribute to the identification of candidates for new outcome measures
- Potential implications for the delivery of urgent and emergency primary care services – clinical education?



Thank you

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